

REMARKS

Applicant thanks the Examiner for his time and assistance via telephone conference on August 25, 2004. The rejections of Claim 22 as allegedly being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 6,374,349 issued to McFarling ("McFarling") was discussed, particularly as to the coverage of the Claims' limiting "decision function." To overcome the rejection, the Claim 22 has been amended. Claim 31 was also amended to overcome the indefiniteness rejection. It is believed that the amendments address the Examiner's concerns without adding new material.

CONCLUSION

In view of the foregoing, it is believed that all claims now pending patentably define the subject invention over the prior art of record, and are in condition for allowance and such action is earnestly solicited at the earliest possible date. If the Examiner believes that a telephone conference would be useful in moving the application forward to allowance, the Examiner is encouraged to contact the undersigned at (310) 207-3800.

Dated: Aug. 27, 2004 Respectfully submitted,
BLAKELY, SOKOLOFF, TAYLOR & ZAFMAN, LLP



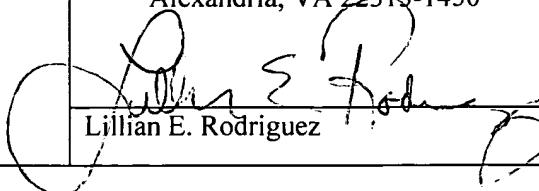
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8-27-04

August 27, 2004